

ITEM 9-C

CITY OF ALAMEDA

Memorandum

To: Honorable President and
Members of the Planning Board

From: Laura Ajello
Planner

Date: September 26, 2011

Re: **Public Art Proposal – Grand Marina – Warmington Residential
CA.** Two freestanding metal sculptures to be located on private
property off Hibbard Street and at the foot of Grand Street adjacent
to the Grand Marina and the Oakland/Alameda Estuary. If approved,
the sculptures will satisfy the Alameda public art requirement

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The project is a public art proposal for Warmington Residential California (commonly referred to as Warmington Homes) at Grand Marina. Pursuant to the requirements of the City of Alameda Public Art Ordinance, the applicant is requesting approval of on-site artwork in the form of two metal sculptures. The sculptures will be installed on private property along the publicly accessible shoreline. Project completion is anticipated by January 2012, weather permitting.

BACKGROUND

On November 14, 2006, the City Council approved the Grand Marina Master Plan and associated General Plan Amendment, Rezoning, Tentative Parcel Map, and Development Plan and Design Review applications to construct 40 residential units at the foot of Grand Street adjacent to the Grand Marina and the Oakland/Alameda Estuary. Pursuant to AMC 30-65.3, public art is required for this project. The applicant has opted to further enhance the Grand Marina site with an on-site public art installation as opposed to creating on-site cultural programs or facilities or making an in-lieu contribution to the Public Art Fund, which are also allowed under the Public Art ordinance.

Pursuant to Alameda Municipal Code Section 30-65.3, private and municipal developments with Building Development Costs of \$250,000 or more shall devote an amount not less than one percent of such costs for acquisition and installation of Public Art on the development site, subject to a maximum of \$150,000. According to City building permit records, the valuation of the new housing development is approximately \$13,980,076.74 which means that the applicants are required to allocate at least of \$139,800.74 towards the acquisition and installation of public art. The value of the proposed sculptures meets the required allocation: the total budget is \$141,000 (Attachment 5).



Examples of recent Public Art projects (left to right) Perforce Software, Rhythmix Cultural Works, and Park Centre Animal Hospital

The Public Art Commission (PAC) is responsible for reviewing and approving public art proposals, however, due to a lack of a quorum they cannot review this project. PAC has been largely dormant, with no meetings since May 2009. This is the first application to be submitted to the City since the Perforce Software mosaic was reviewed and approved in 2008.

Currently, under City Council authorization in December of 2010, the Planning division is overseeing an update to public art policy. A public workshop/scoping session is scheduled for September 21, 2011.

REVIEW CRITERIA AND STAFF ANALYSIS

As the acting public board responsible for reviewing and approving public art proposals, the Planning Board must ensure compliance with the following program criteria established by the Public Art Ordinance:

Inherent Artistic Quality: (The artistic or conceptual merit of the public art proposal, independent of other considerations.) Based upon a review of the application, staff finds that the proposal exhibits inherent artistic quality and is consistent with the objectives and goals of the public art ordinance.

Context: (Works of art must be compatible in scale, material, form and content with their surroundings. Consideration should be given to the architectural, historical, geographical and social/cultural context of the site.) The waterfront theme of the sculptures titled “Portal” and “Nautilus” are compatible with the estuary site and history of a working waterfront. The landscaping, pedestrian-scaled size, location, and orientation of the sculptures are also appropriate for the site and will enhance the streetscape. Staff finds that the proposal is well conceived and compatible with the physical environment.

Media: (All forms of public art may be considered. Works may be either portable or permanently attached.) Staff finds that the sculptures are appropriate and consistent with the intent of the Public Art Ordinance criteria.

Permanence: (Due consideration shall be given to the structural and surface soundness, and to inherent resistance to theft, vandalism and weathering.) The metal sculptures are durable and the finishes are exterior grade. The finish can be easily touched up in the case of vandalism. The size and sheer weight of the sculptures will act as theft deterrence; additionally the mechanical attachments will be welded in place.



Porthole



Nautilus

Ability to Maintain: (Significant consideration shall be given to the cost of on-going maintenance and repair anticipated, and the applicant's ability to provide adequate maintenance.) The proposed artwork will be maintained and protected by the project owners, as required by the conditions of approval. The proposed artwork requires virtually no maintenance other than recommended occasional cleaning. The sculpture's placement allows for easy maintenance because it can be easily accessed for cleaning.

Public Safety and Accessibility: (Each work shall be evaluated to ensure that it does not present a hazard to public safety and complies with all applicable building codes and accessibility requirements.) Installation of the artwork will comply with building codes and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. The artwork is permanently and securely mounted, surrounded by landscaping, and not located directly in the path of pedestrian travel; it shall not pose a public safety hazard.

Diversity: (The City is committed to acquiring public art that reflects its diverse cultural communities and perspectives. To that end, the City shall actively seek public art from artists of diverse backgrounds. The program encourages works in a variety of styles, scales, media and numbers of artists represented. Innovative work as well as established art forms shall be encouraged.) The sculptures are an expression of the diverse interests reflected in Alameda, including ties to our historic Navy ties and working waterfront and is classic yet innovative application of this particular style of art. The artist is a bay area local and a traditional blacksmith with a studio in Alameda.

Feasibility: (Proposed works shall be evaluated for feasibility and factors to be considered include, but are not limited to: project budget, timeline, artist's experience, soundness of materials, City approval requirements, and level of community support.) The project is feasible and staff expects that the proposed public art will be well received by the community because it enlivens and complements the public waterfront.

Duplication: (To assure that the public art is a fine art product, the artist will be asked to warrant that the work is unique. A limited edition will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.) Staff finds that the work is unique and qualifies as a fine art product.

The Public Art Commission recently adopted Guidelines for public art identification signage. Staff recommends that approval and installation of an identification sign by Planning staff be made a condition of approval of this request.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the CEQA guideline section 15301 - Existing Facilities.

PUBLIC NOTICE

A notice for this hearing was mailed to property owners and residents within 300 feet of this site, published in the Alameda Journal and posted at the subject property. Staff has not received any public comments on this project.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Planning Board find the project exempt from further review under CEQA pursuant to guideline section 15301; and approve Public Art Application CB07-0796.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED BY:

REVIEWED BY:

LAURA AJELLO, PLANNER

MARGARET KAVANAUGH-LYNCH
PLANNING SERVICES MANAGER

Attachments:

1. Draft Resolution
2. Artist's Statement and Photos
3. Elevation and Site Plans
4. Artist's Resume
5. Cost Estimate